

September 4, 2008

TO: Hope Janke, Counsel to the Director
Bureau of Justice Assistance

RE: Comments OJP Docket No. 1478

Dear Ms. Janke

Please accept the following comments reference the proposed rule change for the Public Safety Officers' Benefit Program.

I appreciate the efforts on behalf of the survivor families across the United States to ensure that all firefighters who die in the line of duty are awarded the benefits through the PSOB program.

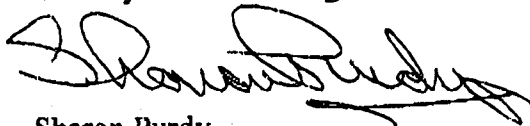
As a former Deputy Director of a State regulatory agency, I understand that occasional rule changes are for 'housekeeping' issues. However, I would like to make comment on two issues in the proposed rule changes.

I agree with the proposed inclusion of the wording from the Memorandum re: "Competent Medical Evidence to the Contrary" and the Memorandum re: "Nonroutine stressful or strenuous physical activity"; both dated October 2, 2007 and signed by the Director. Both memorandums make a very important statement which echoes the intent of the Hometown Heroes Bill when it was introduced in 2002.

On page 39638 of the Federal Register, first column letter "h" which reads "when actually taking formal part in a **mandatory**, structured activity within an official training program of his public agency". I have a problem with the word **MANDATORY**.

Many states do not require ongoing training nor do they require the need for firefighters to renew their state issued firefighter certification. That being said in those states where no continuing education is required, no mandatory training would be needed. Therefore, any training done by the department would be on a voluntary basis. While mandatory training would be beneficial, that is not reality and we should appreciate that departments are training on a continued basis on their own. I urge you to strike the word **MANDATORY** from this rule.

Thank you for allowing me to voice my opinion on these important rule changes.



Sharon Purdy
Wife of Lee A. Purdy, January 8, 2000
521 S. Broadway
Spencerville, OH 45887